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ABSTRACT

A sample of students who withdrew from Mesa (Arizona) Community College (MCC) during spring 1986 was surveyed to determine reasons for withdrawal and dropout characteristics. Study findings included the following: (1) the primary reason for withdrawing was conflicting job hours, with 52% of the students who were employed working over 40 hours per week; (2) 61% indicated that they planned to return to MCC in the future; (3) counseling and placement/entry testing were the two most frequently used student services, while child care and student activities were the least used; (4) 64% of the respondents indicated that they were satisfied or very satisfied with the college, 14% said they were disappointed or very disappointed, and 10% said they were dissatisfied with instruction; and (5) while White students most frequently reported "conflicting job hours" as their reason for withdrawing, Hispanic students more frequently listed "financial reasons." (LAL)

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RESEARCH REPORT

1

Student Withdrawal Survey
College Withdrawal
Spring 1986

JC 870 123

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Student Withdrawal Survey
College Withdrawal
Spring 1986

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September 1986

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Mesa Community College
College Withdrawal Survey

The contents of this report contains an analysis of survey information obtained from a sample of students who withdrew from Mesa Community College during the Spring 1986 term. One should understand that such data is a reliable source of information from students completing the survey form. Also, one should remember that such information reports on what has already happened and usually does not provide answers to the cause or reason for the occurence. For this reason, sections of this report seek to highlight some areas which may need to respond to some of the findings of the survey. This document is divided in the the below sections:

* Some Highlights

* Suggested Uses of the Data

* What does our data say about:

  - What were the primary reasons for the students' withdrawal?
  - Did the withdrawal data vary according to ethnic grouping?
  - What are the future enrollment plans of the students who withdrew?
  - What were the employment characteristics of the students who withdrew?
  - What college services had the students used?
  - What was the students' opinion of their educational experience at our college?

* So what now .....

This project was directed by Dr. J. Joaquin Montemayor, Director of the Office of Research and Development at Mesa Community College with assistance from Dr. Jack Hannon. Jim Reed, Director of Tex-SIS Services in Corsicana, Texas provided questionnaires, computer processing, and analyst services for the project. The members of the survey team wish to express their appreciation to the administrators and staff of Mesa Community College for their support. A special thanks also goes to the students taking the time to respond to the survey form. Additional information concerning this report can be obtained by contacting the Office of Research and Development at Mesa Community College.

SOME HIGHLIGHTS

The overall primary reason given by the students for withdrawing from college was conflicting job hours - with a full 52% of those students employed reporting that they were working in excess of 40 hours per week.

Approximately 61% of the students indicated that they planned to return to Mesa Community in the future.

The two student services areas reported as being used most frequently by the students were counseling and placement/entry testing. The least used were child care services and student activities.

The students reported a relatively good overall opinion about the college with 64% in the very satisfied/satisfied range on the rating scale; 13% reported to be in the very disappointed/disappointed range. About one out of every ten reported cases of "dissatisfaction with instruction".

While whites indicated "conflicting job hours" as their primary reason for withdrawing, Hispanics indicated "financial reasons" as their primary reason.

SUGGESTED USES OF THE DATA

In addition to college evaluative data, survey results produce excellent opportunities for presentations to groups and sharing of information. The production of such data involves much time and effort to be exerted by institutional staff - and the information should be put to work as soon as possible. Some examples of how this type of outcome information might be put to use are:

1. Basis for making requests to institutional staff to respond in writing to issues raised by the data.

2. Verbal presentations to instructional and student services administrators, department chairpeople, directors, and program coordinators.

3. Release of public relations information to the public through the local newspaper(s).

4. Reports to accreditation teams.

5. Release of public relations information to the student body through the campus newspaper.

6. Release of data to institutional staff through the use of faculty/administrator campus newsletter.

7. Marketing and recruitment efforts through analyses of target populations.

8. Verbal presentation to college President and/or Administrative Cabinet.

9. Verbal presentation to college governing body.

10. Treatment of special concerns unique to the college's institutional environment.

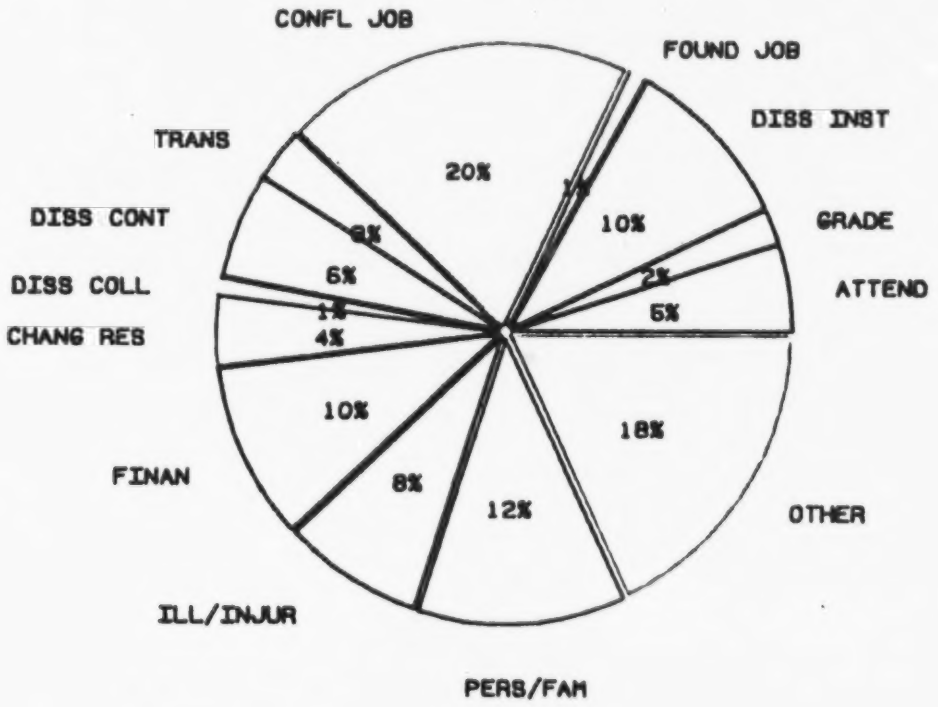
11. Identification of populations needing special types of support services.

WHAT DID OUR DATA SAY ABOUT .....

WHAT WERE THE PRIMARY REASONS FOR THE STUDENTS' WITHDRAWAL?

The overall primary reason given by the students for withdrawing from college was conflicting job hours - with a full 52% of those students employed reporting that they were working in excess of 40 hours per week. Following the "conflicting job hours" reason closely were reasons related to personal/family issues (items listed as "other' included such reasons as couldn't keep up with class, husband problems, new baby, no time, found a job, getting married, couldn't get financial aid, changed majors, class cancelled, joining the air force, and going to ASU. The least cited reason was "dissatisfied with college in general". See chart below for graphic representation of the data.

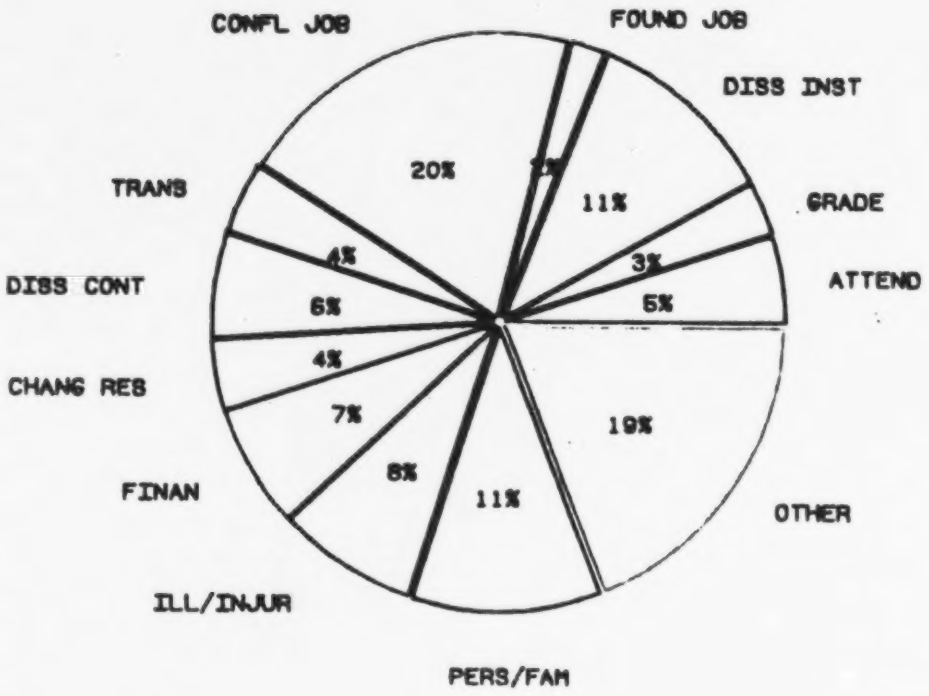
REASONS FOR COLLEGE WITHDRAWAL



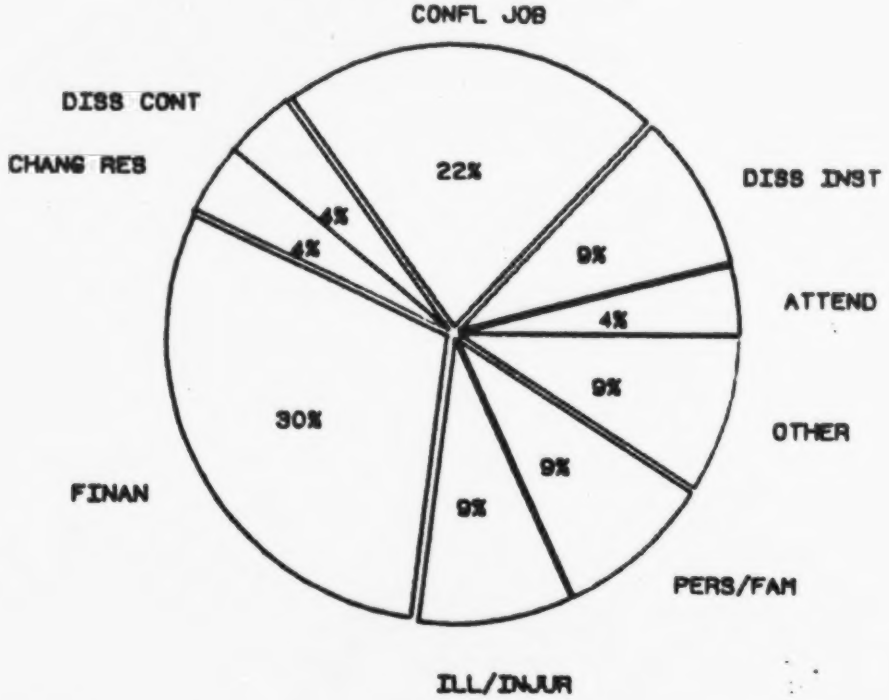
DID THE WITHDRAWAL DATA VARY ACCORDING TO ETHNIC GROUPING?

In the analysis of ethnic group data, some difference was noted in the students' response to the reason for college withdrawal. The primary reason given by whites was "conflicting job hours"; the primary reason given by Hispanics was "financial reasons". See chart below for graphic representation of the data.

REASONS FOR COLL/W - WHITE



REAS FOR COLL/W - HISPANIC

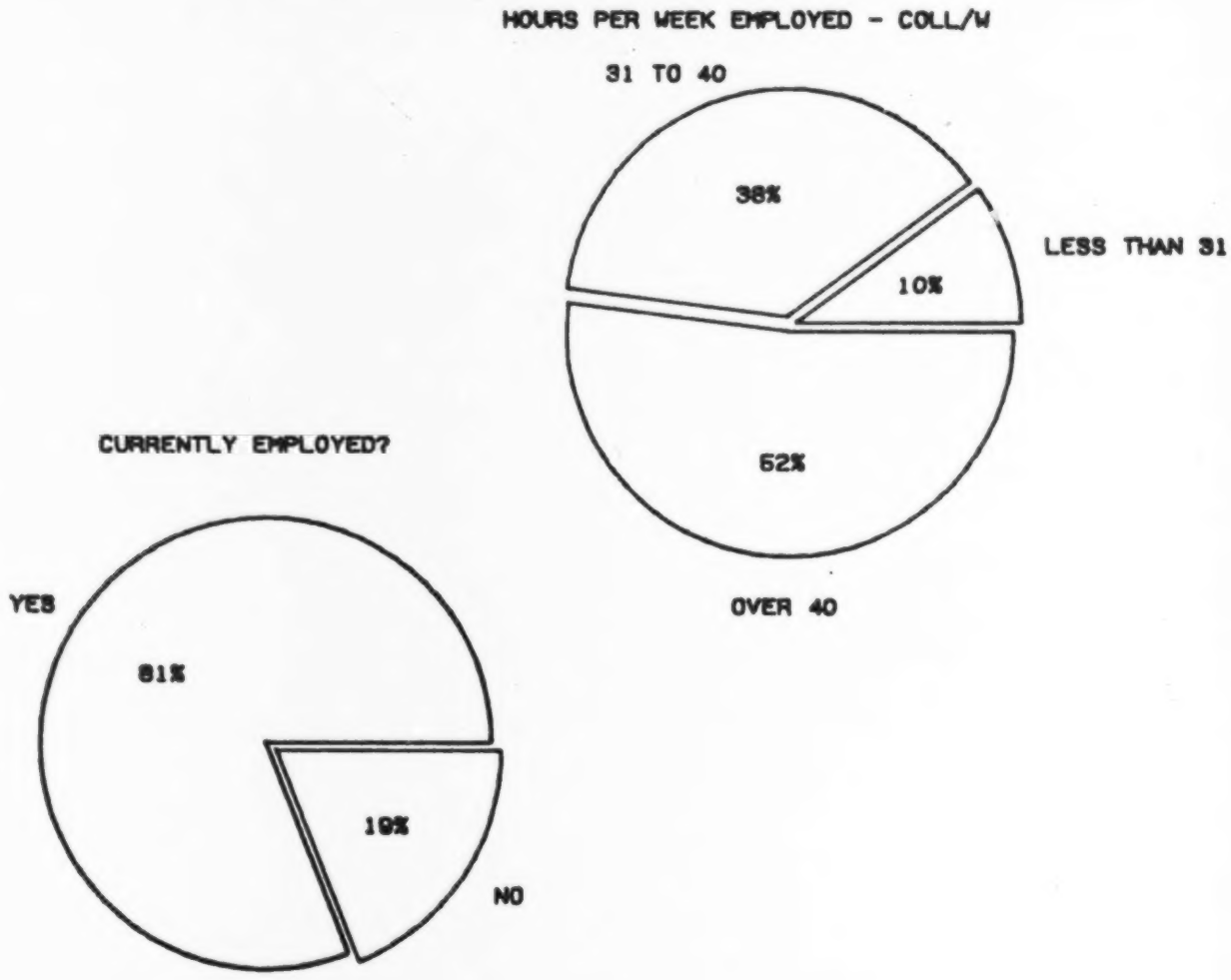


WHAT ARE THE FUTURE ENROLLMENT PLANS OF THE STUDENTS WHO WITHDREW?

Approximately 61% of the students indicated that they planned to return to Mesa Community in the future. 23% indicated they were undecided about their enrollment plans. Most (60%) indicated plans to return the following Fall term.

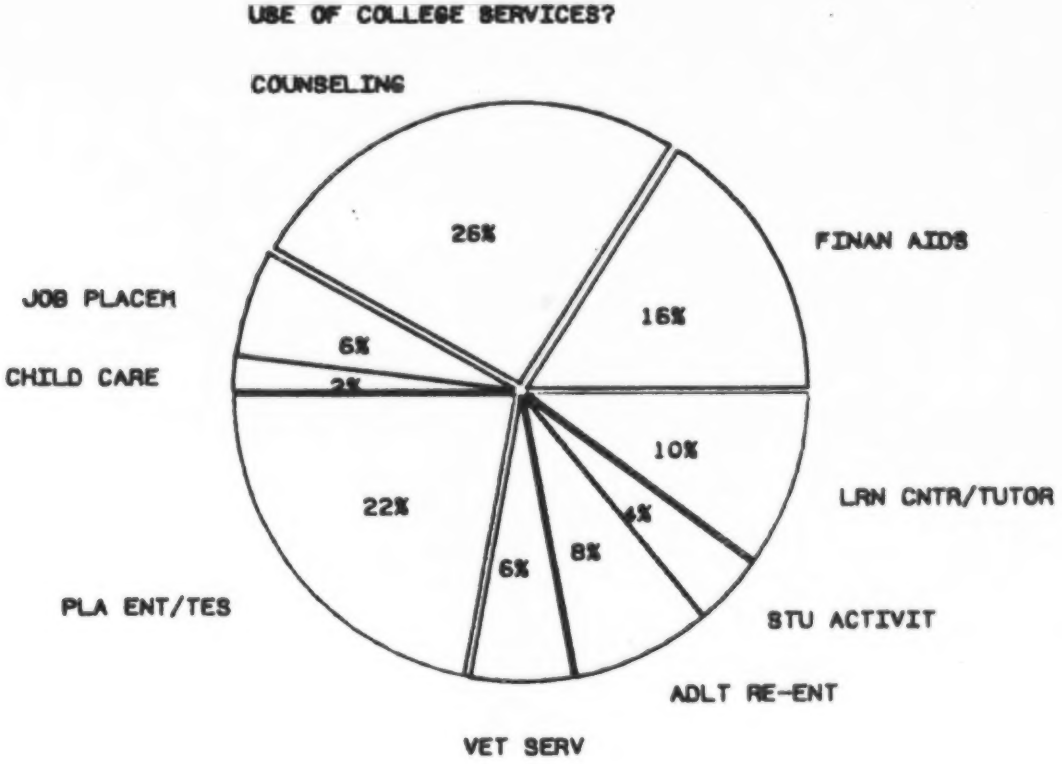
WHAT WERE THE EMPLOYMENT CHARACTERISTICS OF THE STUDENTS WITHDRAWING?

81% of the students indicated that they were employed at the time of withdrawal from college. A full 52% of those students employed reported that they were working in excess of 40 hours per week. Of those employed, only 10% reported less than 31 hours of employment per week.



WHAT COLLEGE SERVICES HAD THE STUDENTS USED?

The two student services areas reported as being used most frequently by the students were counseling and placement/entry testing. The least used were child care services and student activities. A relatively large percentage (73%) indicated they had used one or more of the college services listed on the survey instrument. See chart below for graphic representation of the data.



WHAT WAS THE STUDENTS' OPINION OF THEIR EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE AT OUR COLLEGE?

The students reported a relatively good overall opinion about the college with 64% in the very satisfied/satisfied range on the rating scale; 13% reported to be in the very disappointed/disappointed range.

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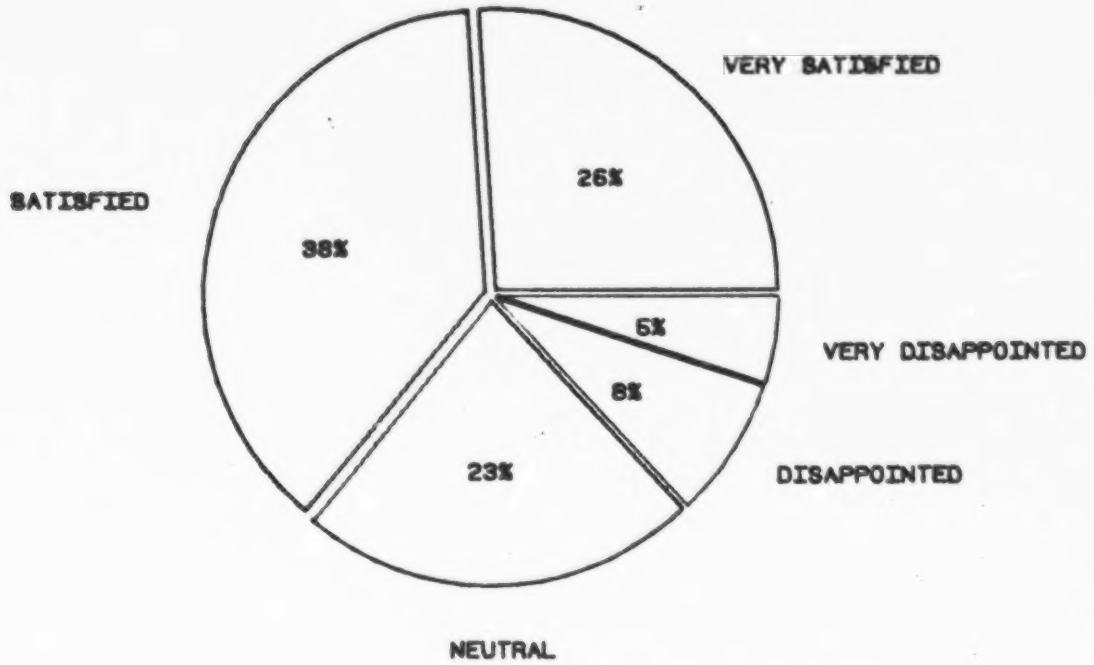

SO WHAT NOW .....

One of the primary issues raised in this study was the conflict of the students' job with his or her interest in attending Mesa Community College. What instructional strategies and/or administrative changes can be made to assist in reducing this schedule conflict for some students?

Almost one out of every three Hispanic students reported "financial reasons" as their primary reason for withdrawing from college. What student services planning and development needs to take place to assist in this issue?

Although the students reported to be relatively satisfied with Mesa Communty College in general, about one out of every ten students reported some dissatisfaction with instruction. Do these issues need to be isolated and, if so, what can the college do to assist?

Almost one out of every four students who withdrew indicated some indecision about his or her plans for enrolling in the future. Does this present a recruitment opportunity and, if so, how should it be implemented?

A relatively large percentage (73%) indicated they had used one or more of the college services listed on the survey instrument. Does this have implications for planning of the student services program and, if so, how should the plans be implemented?

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